ALBANIA YESTERDAY AND TODAY

712 Albania is also a seat of historic interest having been the battle ground for many wars with the Greeks and the Turks. The national hero of Albania—Scanderbeg the Great—lived in Kruja, where, as a silent testimonial to this great hero's strength, are the remains of the old fortress. It looms directly above the town on a cliff, and the old Tower and lower massive walls still stand. If these old stones could speak, what a story they could tell of the Albanian struggle and strife against the invader! Throughout the country many strategic points are heavily fortified and many watch towers raise their white heads on mountain tops.

574 The Albanians are by far the most hospitable people in Southeastern Europe. Their doors are never closed and a friend cannot ask too much. They are charmingly naive in their manners and delightfully quaint in their cus-
461 toms. There is nothing of the hurried, hysterical existence in Albania; the natives are leisurely and get the full benefit out of their
493 sunny, mellow days. The city man is aware of a pleasant surprise at the lack of the constant blare of the motor horn; the peaceful serenity of the golden days is only broken by the occasional honk of the droschka and the cries of the street vendors.

312 with the household marks of the families which are allowed to used
[493] the particular canal concerned in turn--, the screeching ox cart whose two wheels are two meters high because of the muddy roads, and which is drawn by the animals driven on by the goad and harnessed with a yoke on the nape of their necks; the wooden plow whose slade
501 and handle are both of one piece (Figure 9). The swimming bag made of a goat's skin that is blown up and tied to the front of the body, and the raft made of four such skins and a netting of intertwined osier switches, upon which the swimmer puts his clothes bundle (Figure 6). For the rest the people avail themselves of simple and double canoes, with or without side boards that raise the edge of the boat, with or without flanking beams that are nailed to the boat as floaters designed to maintain the equilibrium (Figures 7 and 8). Plank boats also occur. To husk the corn a mat of intertwined switches is placed on top of four posts rammed into the ground, and the corn cobs are then beaten with sticks one and one-half meters long, until the kernels have all fallen
411 to the ground through the plaited meshes (Figure 11). The long flint-locks, which are quite often beautiful old heirlooms, have only survived still in the south; they are being replaced by the modern repeating rifles, the pistols, and the handjars, the knife with the bone handle
221 of the shank of a cow, and the revolvers. The Albanians are to a
241 large extent farmers and in part migrating herders who commute back and forth between their winter quarters in the plains towards the Adriatic, where they work their fields, and their summer settlements on the highland pastures to which they return after they have finished working
[312] the fields. During wanderings in the highlands they rub last year's
[202] mountain snow on sheets of rock that have been scorched by the sun, in order to get water. The extensive settlement of the mountains has given rise to the development of a good signalling system by means
183 of shooting and shouting and their transmission. Certain old customs have been preserved that bespeak a life in firmly joined group combinations. To these belong the abducting of the bride, bride purchasing, the engagment of children, sworn blood brotherhood, and revenge for
[162] murder. The Albanians are approximately seven-tenths Mohammedan,
771 two-tenths Greek Orthodox, and one-tenth Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, all kinds of remnants have been preserved attesting an earlier spiritual life of the people which practiced a clairvoyant contemplation of supernatural powers and processes, basing its knowledge and its actions on the basis of its magical connection with these mysterious
000 forces. Thus their practices and beliefs included: building sacrifices,
[see 1: Karutz, E1 Europe, cat 116, p.69a -- Analyst]

8:Coon E-5 (1929-30;46-48)1950 EG1 Albania EG1
Highland Ghegs

491 the border to Prizren. This was an old Roman road, and has probably not changed much in a thousand years. At Kukës another road meets it, running south along the Black Drin to Peshkopia and outside Gheg country to Lake Ochrida and Korça. Parts of this road had been widened for vehicular traffic in 1929, but the wide pieces had not been connected. It is said that both these roads have been opened for motor traffic since the Italian occupation.

Another trail goes from Tirana to Zall, thence to Gur i Bardh in Mati, through Klos, across the divide to Bulçiz in Dibra, and thence to Peshkopia. This is the principal route between the new capital and the important region to the northeast. Still another passes from Lesh to Bureli in Mati (fig. 9, *c*), following the banks of the Mati River. Bureli, now a prefect station, has grown important only with the Zog regime. From Bureli one can proceed to the northern Catholic country of Lura and Kthella, and thence down into Dibra, but the road is little traveled. North of the Drin a trail passes from Scutari to Shoshi over the Gur i Kutch, but in winter this is impassable. On the other side there is a road from Kukës across the Drin through the *bairaks* of Bituç, Gashi, and Krasniqi, past Merturi, into Shoshi (fig. 8, *d*). In winter this can be passed by men but not animals. Hence in wintertime no animal traffic can enter either Shoshi, or Shala which lies to its north. Before the boundary was drawn between Albania and Yugoslavia the road from Tropoya, in Gashi (Malsia e Jakovës), to Jakova was much traveled; but now this is forbidden and the people of this tribe must go to market in Kukës.

492 As far as any considerable traffic is con-
482 cerned, horseback and human back are the only methods of land transport available in Ghegnia. In a few of the flatter places, however, other means are used locally for short
493 distances. In the country around Scutari just below the mountains, the farmers use carts, particularly in Zadrima. In Luma, on the flat land at the confluence of the Drins, and in Has on the other side, carts are likewise used, as well as ox-drawn summer sleds.

491 Crossing streams is not a simple matter in Ghegnia. Most of the crossings are fjords, and very cold. I have seen men strip naked to swim across icy rivers in search of a place for

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1[see Cat 116, p 109
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